

Nez Perce National Forest
1005 Highway 13
Grangeville, ID 83530
208-983-5143



Clearwater National Forest
12730 Highway 12
Orofino, ID 83544
208-476-8200

NEWS RELEASE - FIRE UPDATE

CONTACT: Laura Smith

DATE: September 3, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEZ PERCE NATIONAL FOREST:

Salmon River Ranger District – High temperatures and low relative humidities combined to create conditions favorable for fire growth on Saturday.

The Heaven's Gate Complex increased 500 acres to a total of 21,000 acres. It is 50% contained with full containment projected for September 6.

The complex consists of four fires: the 17,310-acre Black Butte Fire located in, and west of the Gospel-Hump Wilderness; the 3,625-acre Green Acres Fire located in the Nez Perce National Forest and Hells Canyon National Recreation Area; the 55-acre Horse Heaven Fire in Hells Canyon; and the 10-acre McCrea Fire in the Nez Perce National Forest.

There are 215 personnel assigned to the fire. They are supported by three aircraft, six fire engines, four water tenders and three bulldozers.

The burnout on the western flank of the Black Butte Fire was completed Saturday. The fire line held until mid morning when the fire crossed the line, spread into Bullion Creek and moved southwest down the Salmon River. Structure protection was then initiated at Scott Ranch.

Today firefighting personnel will concentrate on completing and strengthening the western fire line for the Black Butte Fire. Structure protection will continue at the Scott Ranch and occupants of any cabins adjacent to Forest Service Road No. 9918 will be advised about the fire's progress. Forest Roads No. 394 and No. 643 will be patrolled and recreationists advised to leave.

Due to the westerly spread of the Black Butte Fire, an area closure has been modified. The new closure encompasses the southwestern 1/3 of the Gospel-Hump Wilderness between Forest Road No. 444 and the Salmon River. The western boundary originates at the mouth of Kelly Creek, north to Little Slate Saddle, then along Forest Road No. 394 to just east of Florence. It then ties back into the Wilderness north of Road No. 9922.

Forest Roads No. 394 and 643 just west of the area closure are also closed.

-MORE-

The closure associated with the Green Acres Fire remains in effect for that portion of the Hells Canyon Wilderness from Windy Saddle north to Forest Road No. 1819 and west to the Snake River. Seven Devils Road No. 517 and Seven Devils Campground have been reopened; however, trails 124, 140, 58 and 101 north from the campground remain closed.

Additional information regarding the fire complex and related closures are available at:

Nez Perce National Forest – <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/nezperce/gvc>

Heavens Gate Complex – <http://fs.fed.us/r1/fire/incident/teams/stanich>

inciWeb Incident Information – <http://www.inciweb.org>

Please contact Information Officer Kimberly Nelson at (208)628-3589 for further information regarding the Heavens Gate Fire Complex.

One new fire was reported on the Nez Perce National Forest's Clearwater Ranger District. It has been extinguished. No new fires were reported on the Salmon River, Red River or Moose Creek Ranger Districts.

CLEARWATER NATIONAL FOREST:

The Clearwater National Forest's North Fork District reports one new fire. No new fires were reported on the Lochsa, Powell or Palouse Ranger Districts.

The Crab Fire, approximately eight airline miles east of Powell, remains ten acres. Crews will reinforce lines today and attack adjacent spot fires.

Several wildland fire use fires in the Clearwater National Forest's backcountry are being allowed to burn to improve forest conditions and big-game habitat. The largest of these is the Pot Mountain Complex, four fires which have spread over more than 1600 acres. Prescribed fires ignited August 28 continue to grow, reducing fuel and improving big-game habitat. Information about these fires is posted on the Forest's website:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/clearwater>.

For public safety, several roads and trails have been closed. Specific information is posted at: http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/clearwater/VisitorInfo/Assets/travel_info.

OTHER AGENCIES

No new fires were reported by Craig Mountain (IDL), Maggie Creek (IDL), CPTPA or the BLM.

#